

# BAHRAIN

*Issued by the "Bahrain Freedom Movement" to promote human and constitutional rights*

## Khalifi attempts to hide defeats in their three wars

The persistent attempts by Bahrain's dictators to portray the situation as "normal" and "stable" and "under control" confirm the opposite. Stable regimes do not do usually do that. In a stable country political prisoners are not locked up in their thousands, tortured, executed or banished. Ordinary people are not forcefully disappeared or punished for what they say. The façade of normality is possible only because of the presence of thousands of armies of occupation, foreign troops and mercenaries. The situation in Bahrain is far from normal. The khalifi dictator knows this fact very well. He is aware that mothers and fathers curse him and his dynastical rule day and night and pray for their speedy downfall. Of course the regime can recruit agents from all walks of life. In this world there are many opportunists, mercenaries, greedy and selfish who are ready to part with their conscience in return for the petrodollars which are robbed from the people and spent to recruit them. This is not new or particular to Bahrain. This is the normal behaviour of those who rule without legitimacy or constitutional foundations. It is obvious that tribalism is one of the antidotes of democracy and rule of law. This form of government is unsustainable. It relies on force and compulsion. The rule of law does not hold here. It is the chief who is the decision-maker and the arbiter. It is impossible to create democracy in a tribal environment which also views human rights as a luxury.

The persistent attempts to camouflage the failure with cheap propaganda are among the features of failed regimes who are often defeated at home and abroad. In the past few years the khalifi dictators suffered major defeats in their three wars that they had waged against others. Yet the propaganda of the counter revolution forces continues to deceive people and mislead the public opinion. The three defeats must be highlighted in clear terms to show how these regimes are intrinsically weak.

The fist is their war on Yemen. They had participated fully in the Saudi-led aggression from the first day. They sent F16s and other American-supplied machinery to kill Yemenis and destroy their heritage. After almost five years the whole coalition, supported by USA and UK has been brought to its knees. Despite their poverty, weak defences and lack of modern means of

warfare, the Yemenis have been able to withstand the daily bombings that killed tens of thousands of innocent civilians, destroyed the civilisational heritage of Yemen and caused the worst humanitarian crisis in modern times. While the Saudi-led aggression continued unhindered for the first four years, the current situation has fundamentally altered the balance of power. The war which was promised to last no more than few weeks has now spelt over into the furthest points of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The bombing of airports in both Saudi Arabia and UAE were the first sign that a resurgent Yemeni determination was beginning to yield fruit and alter the course of the war. This was followed by the bombing of the major oil installations at Abqaiq and Khrais in the Eastern Province that knocked out almost half of the daily Saudi oil production. The message was clear; the Saudis, Emiratis and khalifis would almost certainly be defeated. Now Saudi emissaries are negotiating with the Yemenis led by Ansarullah on the terms of ending the war. This time the Yemenis would dictate the terms. The khalifis have thus lost their gamble and were comprehensively defeated at the war front.

The second war has been the one that targeted Qatar. It is now three years since the counter-revolution forces led by the Saudis had singled out their neighbouring state for revenge and isolation. They imposed inhumane conditions on the Qataris, closing their airspace and encircling them from all sides except the North where the Qataris found a gauntlet to Iran. The past three years have witnessed enormous political activity leading to an alliance between Qatar and Turkey, a significant improvement in relations with Iran and an independent Qatari foreign policy that has defied all expectations. Now the evil counter-revolution alliance have realised the futility of their action and that their gamble has failed drastically. Qatar has emerged more independent forging relations with the powers that the Saudis have always despised; Turkey and Iran. Now this unholy alliance has begun a soul-seraching exercise to find a way out of their debacle. Talks are said to be secretly being conducted with the Qataris to find a face-saving political formula to re-establish links with Doha. This time the Qataris are imposing

their terms while the evil alliance attempts to close another failed chapter by the Saudi-led coalition. The khalifis are much weaker than confronting their neighbour. Their mouthpiece at the helm of their foreign policy has been so antagonistic to the Qataris that it is unlikely to forgive his grave sins. A policy of total shamble has backfired and the khalifis must concede defeat.

The third war has been with the native Bahraini population. For decades the khalifis have repressed the people until they staged their biggest revolution nine years ago. Despite the unlimited resources and support from their masters, the khalifis have failed to contain the anger that had motivated the people to undertake the path of the Revolution. It is clear that this time the two sides are fighting an existential war against the other. The native Bahrainis are determined to achieve fundamental political change in their country and to dismiss the khalifi body that they consider to be "foreign" or "alien". For decades the khalifis have refused to integrate in the Bahraini society, preferring to keep within their own tribal circles. This has alienated almost all native Bahrainis, Shia and Sunnis. Their attempts to put out the people's Revolution have not yielded results. Thousands of political prisoners remain behind bars, while hundreds are in exile. Many have been martyred in the revolutionary process and left behind a legacy of defiance and determination to continue the struggle. This time the khalifi crimes have been abundant and beyond any attempt of reconciliation. People are now dismissive of any deal with those who hate them and design their policies to engineer new demographic situation to exclude the natives. By any means the khalifis have lost the war against the native Bahrainis. The situation may drag on for some time but without any breakthrough in the relations between the two sides. At this front the khalifi defeat has been complete and irreversible. The trust has been totally lost and both view each other with contempt, hate and rejection. The Bahrainis insist on regime change, while the khalifis cling to their policy of demographic change. A new dawn will rise without them.



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## Saudis agreed Trump's demands in 35 s; Australian apology to Hakeem

Deep indignation has swept Saudi Arabia in recent days at the way the regime has conducted itself in its relations with the US and how President Trump has made them a laughing stock. On 21st October Trump tweeted: "You read where we're sending some troops to Saudi Arabia. That's true. Because we want to help Saudi Arabia. They have been a very good ally. They've agreed to pay for the cost of those troops. They've agreed to pay fully for the cost of everything we're doing over there. . . . Saudi Arabia is paying for 100 percent of the cost, including the cost of our soldiers. And that negotiation took a very short time — like, maybe, about 35 seconds." House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), recounting to reporters a conversation at the White House with Trump, Oct. 17, said: President Trump has a soft spot for Saudi Arabia. It's where he took his first overseas trip as president. He also worked hard to rehabilitate on the world stage its de facto leader, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, after the CIA concluded he had ordered the 2018 assassination of Washington Post contributing columnist Jamal Khashoggi. On 2nd October two more death penalties were passed by a Saudi court in Riyadh. Mohammad Al Labad and Mohammad Al Faraj, both from Awamiya town in the Eastern Province were given the capital punishment for taking part in anti-regime protests several years ago. Yesterday the same court adjourned the trial of two other men from Qatif, Eastern Province until 19th January 2020. Mohammad Al Shakouri and As'ad Al Sayed Ali were tortured severely to extract false confessions which were used to charge them.

Saudi jails are now full of people calling for their natural rights. Few days ago Fawzan Al Harbi addressed the outside world saying that he has been behind bars since 2014, sentenced to ten years in prison followed by ten years of travel ban. He was charged with forming unlicensed association called Hasm, calling for freedom of speech, disobeying the oppressive rulers and distorting the image of the state.

Two more innocent people have been detained by the Saudis: the poet Hmood bin Gasi al-Subaie and the designer Gunsol Subai. The detention came on the grounds of a recent poem by Hmood in which he criticized the practices of Turki Aal al-Sheikh, head of General Authority for Entertainment.

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) boss has personally apologised to footballer Hakeem al-Araibi over his detention in a Thai prison for 77 days. Commissioner Reece Kershaw, who assumed the AFP's top job earlier this month, told Senate Estimates bureaucratic mistakes led to the permanent Australian resident (of Bahraini origin) being locked up. Commissioner Kershaw said he felt the need to write directly to the footballer to say sorry, having reviewed the case after he took over the leadership of the AFP. "I have delivered a letter to Mr al-Araibi to extend AFP's apology for his unfortunate detention in Thailand," Commissioner Kershaw said. "And to reassure Mr al-Araibi that the AFP is continuing to review and improve processes in consultation with other relevant agencies to ensure we respond appropriately to these matters in the future. "As an accountable organisation to the community, I felt it was

right to do," he said.

For a week now, Hussain Ali Moosa has been on hunger strike at the notorious Jau prison. He is calling for the removal of the barriers that separate the inmates from their relatives during family visits, increasing the duration of these visits and arranging special visits for the married couples. Human Rights activist, Ali Haggi who has now spent 53 days on hunger strike has, again, repeated similar demands and insisted on continuing his strike until they are met. The mother of Hussain Ali Mahdi Jassim, 23, has expressed serious fears for his life after he had been transferred to the military hospital. Hussain has a death sentence on his head on trumped up charges. He has been behind bars since April 2016. He has now spent ten days on hunger strike.

A seminar was held at the British Parliament on Thursday 17th October on the situation of human rights in Bahrain. Several activists addressed the seminar to highlight the serious situation in the country. Among them was Lucila Berwick from BIRD who talked about a joint report by BIRD and ADHRB on the ill treatment of women detainees. Bahar Saba of Reprive highlighted the cases of more 23 innocent native Bahrainis on death row calling for their acquittal. Ali Mushaima presented the case of his father, Hassana Mushaima who has been in jail since March 2011 and suffers various ailments including Cancer. Olivia Rosenstrom, of Temple Garden Chambers and Sayed Ahmad Al Wadaei dealt with HR violations.

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## Whitewashing Saudi crimes, challenging khalifis with empty stomachs

An article by Eden Gillespie titled "The Instagram influencers hired to rehabilitate Saudi Arabia's image" was published by The Guardian on 11th October. It said social media stars have been taking paid trips to the kingdom and posting lavish praise in return — avoiding its troubling human rights record. A year on from the brutal murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the kingdom of Saudi Arabia is using social media influencers, including some Australians, to repair its damaged image. On Instagram, blonde, blue-eyed women wearing abayas in the dusty landscape beckon millions of followers to rethink their perception of Saudi Arabia. The country has employed the public relations company Gateway KSA, of which Prince Turki Al Faisal Al Saud is an executive member, as one method of bringing social media personalities to the country on all-expenses paid, supervised trips. Dr Raihan Ismail, an associate lecturer at the centre for Arab and Islamic studies at the Australian National University, says Saudi Arabia has invested billions of dollars to reform its image in the west. "The Saudi

government is investing so much in trying to reconstruct its image, particularly after the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi, the Saudi journalist who was killed in the Saudi consulate in Turkey," she says. "I think that's when people started to realise that we're dealing with an authoritarian regime. We're dealing with a state that is so repressive."

Amnesty International is launching a week of global action for the release of human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor? It said that more than 130 organizations had signed a joint letter calling on the United Arab Emirates UAE to free Ahmed. Protests will take place in New York, Washington, Toronto, London and Brussels.

Amnesty International Australia has issued disturbing information about links to the case of Hakeem Al Oraibi who had been detained in Thailand last year. It said that (freedom of information) FOI documents reveal Australian officials endangered Hakeem's safety and ultimately risked his life when they told Bahrain, the country he fled from, that he was travelling. FOI documents raise serious concerns over Australi-

an Government's role in detention of Hakeem. Freedom of information documents finally released after nine months illustrate how shambolic communication and a culture of punishment before protection within the Home Affairs Department put Hakeem al-Araibi's life at risk

Lord Scriven has called on Formula 1 car racing management to re-instate Bahraini native woman activist, Najah Yousuf. She had spent almost two years behind bars for calling on the F1 to stop its race in Bahrain whose government has been conducting heinous human rights crimes. He also called for her compensation. Lord Scriven has also pledged to take up the case of the hunger strikes in Bahraini prisons so that the FCO exercises its human and political responsibility to tame one of its closest allies and stop his crimes.

In a disturbing development native Bahraini political prisoners at the notorious Jau prison have started a new hunger strike after the khalifi torturers reneged on earlier promises to improve the conditions at the torture chambers. More than 120 prisoners had threatened to start another strike if



## Saudis admit bombing civilian targets, Bahrainis insist on political change

On 2nd October the Saudi-led coalition admitted it had carried out an air strike on a blood bank in the Yemeni capital Sanaa earlier this year by "mistake". The attack on the National Centre for Blood Transfusion and Research on 27 April was accidental, according to findings of the coalition's investigative body, the Joint Incident Assessment Team (JIAT). Spokesperson Mansour Al-Mansour, a notorious Bahraini military lawyer, made the announcement yesterday saying investigators had examined the scene of the air strike and had taken statements from medical and administrative staff who work at the building. A "defect in the bomb" was the cause for "the mistake", he said, adding that members of the coalition will provide assistance in repairing the damage caused. Other civilian targets include markets, hospitals, schools, event halls and homes.

On 8th October Human Rights Watch published on its page an article by Bénédicte Jeannerod, the Director of its office in France titled "France Should Hold Firm Against Saudi Abuses". He said: "During the last session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, 25 countries, including 15 from the European Union, supported an Australian-led joint statement highlighting serious human rights violations in Saudi Arabia, and calling on Saudi authorities to ensure truth and justice for the murder of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year. But despite stated principles and commitment to multilateralism, France is not among them." The author urged France to sign the statement: "France has until October 11 to endorse this joint declaration. It

should stand by its own words in condemning the Saudi authorities' blatant human rights violations."

The khalifi dictators of Bahrain have ordered the detention of a senior cleric for one week because he presented a different interpretation of historic facts than what the regime wants to propagate. Sheikh Mohammad Al Rayyash considered the second Umayyad ruler, Yazid as a killer because in 680 AD his lieutenants, under his orders, murdered Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Mohammad and 72 of his relatives and supporters, including children. Yazid's men beheaded the martyrs and paraded the severed heads for 40 days together with women of the prophet's household. Sheikh Al Rayyash had been detained for two weeks last month for criticising Imam Hussain's killers. In the "kingdom of silence" only the regime's version of history is allowed.

Meanwhile, political prisoners Ali AlHajee and Naji Fateel have started their second month of hunger strike to protest the denial by the khalifis of medical care, religious freedom and family visits. Mr Hajee has not seen his family since February 2017. He needs dental implants and urgent jaw surgery but he has been denied them. Mr Fateel suffers injuries to his spinal cord, arms and legs which resulted from torture. Another political prisoner, Hassan Yousuf Al Yasser has appealed to international human rights bodies to intervene so that he gets necessary medical treatment which he has been denied. He suffers from severe joint pain, his left hand and head in addition to serious problems with his vision. He is serving 22-year prison sentence for opposing the khalifi dictatorship.

Yesterday, Human Rights Watch issued a statement condemning the use of medical care as a weapon by the khalifi clan. "It is outrageous that Bahraini authorities are denying detainees medical care that they urgently need, in some cases putting their lives in danger," said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. "Many of these people should not have been imprisoned in the first place, and arbitrary denial of medical care may amount to extrajudicial punishment."

Protests have continued in several towns and villages from Duraz to Abu Saiba, Shakhoura to Sitra. The protesters chanted; people want regime change, Down with Hamad. Almost nine years of revolutionary fervour has not relented. With 5000 political prisoners the khalifi hereditary dictatorship is unfit to rule. It is antiquated, repressive and criminal.

Karrar is a nine year old child who has been admitted to hospital suffering physical and psychological trauma. His mother, Fatimal Ali Abdulla, is one of three sisters from Duraz languishing at khalifi torture chambers for opposing their dictatorship. Their husbands are also incarcerated by khalifi torturers. Their children have been left without parents. One of the women, Aamal, had a miscarriage inside the torture cell. Karrar's grandmother has appealed for their release but to no avail. The khalifis have proven to be eternal enemies of Bahraini natives. The three sisters had appealed their sentences of three years imprisonment, but on 3rd October the dictator, through his "court", rejected it.

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their demands for proper medical care, family visits, books and sanitation conditions were not met. At the Isolation Wing of Jau prison where those sentenced to death are locked up, isolated from this world, at least 13 prisoners have been on hunger strike since last Thursday while at Block 13, the number of hunger strikers has reached 17 including the two human rights activists Ali Haji and Naji Fateel.

Two inmates who had been sentenced to death by khalifi regime have collapsed several times after a week of hunger strike. The wife of Mr Mohammad Ramadan has reported that he is unable to speak, exhausted and suffers a lot of pain. His colleague Moosa Abdulla suffers very low sugar level and intermittent coma. The officer in charge, a Yemeni called Ahmad Jarraf had given orders not to

transfer them to hospitals. The family of another prisoner of conscience, Hussain Al Sahlawi, is extremely concerned for his health after two weeks with no contact or visit. A scheduled family visit yesterday was cancelled by the khalifi torturers.

In the week 7-13 October at least six native Bahrainis were detained by regime's forces and transferred to unknown destinations. At least two protests during the week were

repressed.

On 15th October, The Guardian reported that two former Conservative prime ministers lobbied a Middle Eastern royal family to award a multibillion-dollar oil contract to a company headed by a major Tory donor, the Guardian has established. In March 2017, while in Downing Street, Theresa May wrote to the Bahraini prime minister to support the oil firm Petrofac while it was

bidding to win the contract from the Gulf state. Two months earlier, and just six months after stepping down as prime minister, David Cameron promoted the company during a two-day visit to Bahrain where he met the state's crown prince. Cameron was flown back to Britain on a plane belonging to Ayman Asfari, Petrofac's co-founder, chief executive and largest shareholder. Petrofac did not ultimately win the contract.

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# Bahrain: Prisoners Denied Medical Care

## End Degrading Treatment of Imprisoned Opposition Activists

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(Beirut) – Bahrain’s authorities are failing to provide adequate medical care to high-profile prisoners, Human Rights Watch and the Bahrain Institution for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) said.

Two detained human rights defenders, as well as the family members of four detained opposition activists, told Human Rights Watch and BIRD that prison authorities are arbitrarily denying the prisoners urgent medical care, refusing to refer them to specialists, failing to disclose medical examination results, and withholding medication as a form of punishment. All six detainees are serving prison terms in connection with their prominent roles in opposition and democracy protests in 2011 onward.

“It is outrageous that Bahraini authorities are denying detainees medical care that they urgently need, in some cases putting their lives in danger,” said Joe Stork, deputy Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “Many of these people should not have been imprisoned in the first place, and arbitrary denial of medical care may amount to extrajudicial punishment.”

Denying a prisoner needed medical care violates the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, known as the Mandela Rules.

The health of Abduljalil al-Singace, 57, has deteriorated significantly in detention, his family said. Al-Singace, an academic who was a spokesman for Al Haq, an unlicensed opposition group, is serving a life sentence for his prominent role in the 2011 protests. Al-Singace, who suffered polio as a child and needs to be able to hold crutches to walk, has been experiencing severe chest pain, numbness in his fingers, and shaking in his left hand since August 22, 2019.

Al-Singace’s daughter said that he saw the prison doctor on August 28, for the first time since 2017. Earlier requests for medical attention for neck and back pain that his family said resulted from torture had been denied. Nor did prison officials authorize the white blood cell checkups he needs due to complications arising from a prolonged hunger strike in 2015.

The prison doctor recommended on August 28 that he should see a heart specialist in the Bahrain Defense Forces (BDF) Hospital. On the day of the appointment, prison authorities told al-Singace that they would not take him there as he had refused to put on the prison uniform or wear shackles, his family said.

Hassan Mushaima, 71, the head of Al Haq, was sentenced to life in prison for his peaceful opposition activity.

Mushaima is recovering from lymphoma and requires screening tests every six months. Mushaima’s son said that the last screening occurred in August 2018, following the son’s 46-day hunger strike in London. Mushaima did not receive the results until April 2019. Prison authorities promised to conduct another screening in August, Mushaima’s family said, but had not as of October 2.

Mushaima’s son said that authorities routinely denied Mushaima specialized medical care for his chronic illnesses, which include diabetes, high blood pressure, and gout. Prison authorities insist on shackling Mushaima during transfers to hospital appointments, but he has refused to go under these circumstances, considering it humiliating and unnecessary, his son said.

Under the Mandela Rules, prisoners who require specialist treatment should be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals. Since 10 prisoners escaped from Jaw Prison on January 1, 2017, authorities have shackled all prisoners whenever they leave their cells. International human rights mechanisms have said that the use of restraints on elderly or infirm prisoners who do not pose an escape risk can constitute ill-treatment. Rule 47 of the Mandela Rules states that restraints should only be used to prevent escape or to prevent prisoners from injuring themselves or others.

Naji Fateel, 45, and Ali Hajee, 36, who are also serving long sentences due to peaceful opposition activities, also reported consistent denials of medical care. Fateel suffers from spinal and other injuries that he said resulted from torture in detention, as well as high cholesterol. He told Human Rights Watch that prison authorities do not provide him with required medications, and several times canceled scheduled operations for injuries to his arm and leg. Hajee said prison authorities have denied him permission for a necessary surgery to his lower jaw as well as dental implants.

The Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), set up by King Hamad to investigate the government’s response to the demonstrations in February and March 2011, concluded that approximately 300 people had been convicted by military

courts solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression and assembly. The commission said the authorities should “commute the sentences of all persons charged with offenses involving political expression, not consisting of advocacy of violence.”

Jaw Prison authorities have also denied medical care to prisoners convicted of violent political crimes. Elyas al-Mulla, 28, has stage three colon cancer. His mother told Human Rights Watch that he is suffering from colon pain, pain under his ribs, nausea, and fatigue. Al-Mulla was transferred to a hospital briefly at the end of August for tests, but his mother said she was not informed of his condition and prison authorities have not given him the test results. She said that after chemotherapy sessions prison authorities did not always provide him with the necessary immunity medication, nor did they perform tests requested by al-Mulla’s radiologist. Al-Mulla’s mother said that every time he was transferred to and from a hospital, including after his chemotherapy sessions, authorities shackled him, often causing him severe pain and bleeding.

A family member of Ahmad al-Arab, 27, told Human Rights Watch and BIRD that al-Arab has not been permitted to visit a doctor or receive medication since he tried to escape from prison in 2017. The family member said that al-Arab suffers from severe pain in his leg and his back, as well as several broken teeth, which they alleged were the result of torture.

On August 15, more than 600 prisoners in the Jaw Prison and Dry Dock Detention Center began a hunger strike to protest prison conditions, including denial of medical care.

The people who spoke with Human Rights Watch and BIRD said they had not recently filed complaints with Bahrain’s oversight agencies, including the National Institution for Human Rights and the Ministry of Interior Ombudsman, saying they did not trust them or have confidence that they would help.

Human Rights Watch has found that both of these bodies have repeatedly failed to investigate credible allegations of prison abuse or to hold officials accountable. The UN Committee against Torture has raised concerns that these bodies were neither independent nor effective.

“Bahrain’s oversight bodies should uphold their mandates and investigate these serious allegations of medical negligence,” said Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei, advocacy director at BIRD. “Without effective and independent oversight institutions promoting accountability for human rights violations, prisoners remain at risk of reprisals while perpetrators continue to act with impunity.”

